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STR owners make less than county thinks, says operator

JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A proposed bylaw to regulate short-term rental properties in Haliburton County's four municipalities puts owners at a disadvantage to other commercial accommodation providers.

Algonquin Highlands resident Jacqueline Baptist is a short-term rental (STR) operator who rents out her family's cottage. To be able to afford that cottage, she told county council during its Jan. 10 meeting that it's necessary to rent it out through the Airbnb platform.

"I have long-term roots in Haliburton County," she said, and added that she's part of an online group that aims to show Airbnb owners how to be respectful and responsible.

She said she's concerned the amended bylaw as proposed has significant liabilities for the county.

"As drafted, the bylaw may not elicit strong compliance, be unnecessarily expensive to administer, or present risk to the municipalities," Baptist wrote in a December letter to county council.

Costs to enforce the bylaw would be beyond revenue collected in a climate of

see BYLAW'S page 2

Tracks, Scat and Snowshoes
Karen Koehler shows off a deer hoof found during Yours Outdoors' Tracks, Scat and Snowshoes experience at the Haliburton Forest Wolf Centre. See more photos on page 2. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

County applies for funding for rail trail green space project

JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Haliburton County is going ahead with development of a community green space along the rail trail.

Members of the Haliburton County Rail Trail Community Partners (HCRTCP) met with county council in December ad proposed a Community Greenspace Project along the Haliburton County Rail Trail (HCRT). The project would showcase thriving native plant species along the HCRT.

The group requested county support with a funding application to the TD Friends of the Environment Fund for the project.

Sylvin Cloutier, the county's public works deputy director, told council Jan. 10 that staff believe the proposed project will benefit the rail trail and the surrounding environment.

Staff and the HCRTCP have agreed in

see COUNTY page 2

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Winter explorations
Tracks, Scat and Snowshoes is an experience hosted by Yours Outdoors at Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve to provide lessons on identifying local animal tracks and scat while snowshoeing through a Haliburton Forest trail. Karen Koehler introduces attendees to the wolves of Haliburton Forest Wolf Centre. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

County will manage project funding: warden

from page 1

principle to draft an agreement outlining responsibilities, implementation, maintenance, and evaluation of the project.

The agreement would include work scheduling, work zone safety, identified planting areas and the appropriate plants for the project, and documentation responsibilities.

The first step was to submit the funding application to TD Friends of the Environment Fund before Jan. 15.

Cloutier said there are many benefits to developing the green space.

Staff and HCRTCP believe this will be a long-term partnership benefiting the environment, users, and the county asset being the rail trail corridor.

Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart, asked what the county's responsibility for the green space would be after completion.

"We've gotten tricked into these administrative roles before," he said.

Cloutier said the community partners would essentially take care of everything. All that would be expected of the county is to monitor when the partners are on site to ensure worker safety. County staff would also have a role in identifying planting sites and coordinating maintenance.

Warden Liz Danielsen, who is also the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, said her understanding was that the county would manage the project's funding.

"Hopefully that would roll out without any challenges," she said.

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Tracks, Scat and Snowshoes attendees head out for a hike to test their identifying skills.

Bylaw's success is in its compliance, says operator

from page 1

decreased bookings and more competition. The proposed municipal accommodation tax (MAT) creates a lack of parity between STRs and other commercial accommodation businesses.

STR operators pay personal income tax on what's made from rentals, property tax, and the sales taxes.

That parity deficit is compounded by the requirements that STR operators buy their shoreline road allowance and to undergo a septic system inspection every three years.

There are certain security concerns as well. The bylaw's exterior signage requirement invites break-ins and theft when the property isn't occupied.

Baptist said STRs, which have become an estimated 77 per cent of accommodations in the county, contribute to the local economy and provide employment.

The accommodation tax is a revenue generator for the four lower-tier municipalities in a difficult economy.

"I know how tight money is, so that's a very important one," Baptist said, and added that property owners who cause problems should indeed be fined.

"A successful bylaw will be the one that is complied with," she said.

Baptist said the average host in Haliburton County isn't an investor or a "fat cat." The average income from rentals a year is about $9,000 for less than 50 nights rented annually. Hardly the trappings of a lucrative investment and far less than the $82,476 a year estimated by the county.

Startup costs and inspection fees are expensive hurdles for a host who is making $9,000 a year.

As per an informal social media survey, Baptist said she's found that 63 per cent of respondents offer the home they own for rent, which 10 per cent offer a separate space in the home in which they live.

"These are not people who own 15 cottages and are renting them out as a business," she said.

STR listings increased over the COVID-19 pandemic, and that resulted in a 300 per cent jump in the tourism accommodation unit capacity in the county.

"What this explosion of short-term rentals has done is made Haliburton County a much more accessible destination for people who want to visit it," Baptist said.

Property owners and county officials can agree there's a need for the STR industry to be regulated and safe, she said. The bad apple STR hosts are known by the complaints against them. Existing bylaws should be enforced against those operators.

"I can tell you, I'm not one of the bad apples and I don't like being thought of as one of them," she said.

Baptist recommended a phased-in approach to implementing STR regulation. The first year will see STRs registered and the county can monitor problem properties and enforce existing bylaws.

In the second year, public consultation will be conducted on the proposed bylaw and the county can reconsider such cumbersome aspects of it like shoreline road allowance purchases.

"Then you can move on towards implementation knowing that you're going to get a high compliance rate, which is what everybody wants," she said.

HCFMA disappointed by conditions to return to Head Lake Park

VIVIAN COLLINGS

Editor

The Haliburton Farmers' Market location may, once again, be moved across the park.

The Haliburton County Farmers' Market Association (HCFMA) attended Dysart council's regular meeting on Dec. 12 to request a quick decision about the location of the Haliburton market for 2024.

They asked to be able to move back to their usual location to the right of the town docks in Head Lake Park.

Last summer, it had been moved for the first time to a new location at Rotary Beach Park across the river from Head Lake Park and farther from the downtown core.

Council agreed to let the market use the original location this year, but only if the association follows two terms: to pay $5,000 per season for damage coverages and to move the market's hours to 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. instead of 12 to 4 p.m.

"We can't afford to pay what they're asking as an association," said Brian Nash, a HCFMA board member. "When accounting for all of our expenses, we don't have that money to spare. We're really hoping to work alongside Dysart council for a more feasible solution."

Council had recommended HCFMA ask vendors to provide $25 per market day to go towards the site maintenance fee.

"Vendors are already paying a fee to be part of this market. We think it's unfair to ask them for more for damages we aren't aware of," Nash said.

Nash said the association believes a damage deposit isn't being required from other organizations that use the park.

"If our market had a history of causing extensive damage, therefore merriting a significant sum of money to be able to repair that, we understand that … but there's no history of that," he said. "Yes, of course there's the odd tire track or broken sprinkler, but $5,000 would account for a whole lot of damage."

If the conditions aren't followed, the market would see another summer from across the Drag River, out of sight, and the association fears, out of mind.

HCFMA said the location change had detrimental effects on the market last summer.

"We've kept an idea of attendance numbers for all our markets. When we compare those markets this past year versus the year before, Haliburton was significantly down. And it wasn't just down number-wise, but revenue-wise, too," said Mike Townsend, a vendor and HCFMA board member.

Based on their numbers, the Haliburton location was down 38 per cent from the previous year.

"That's a significant drop. Some vendors' had up to a 30 per cent decrease in revenue," Townsend said.

Attendance at the Minden and the Abbey Gardens' markets, in contrast, were both up over 20 per cent each.

He explained the benefit of Minden's Market being only a block over from Bobcaygeon Road.

> ***"It's important to us. It's an important community cultural event, and it needs to be there."***
>
> — Brian Nash, HCFMA board member

"It's been really good for everybody. The vendors are happy, town is happy, and we just want to do the same thing in Haliburton. We've been there before, and we always thought it worked out well both for us and for the stores in town," Townsend said.

At the same meeting, council was provided with a letter from the Haliburton BIA in support of a move back to the market's original location.

"With the Farmers Market tucked out of sight, the amount of visitors and shoppers downtown were down significantly," said BIA president David Zilstra in the letter. "That connection is now broken, but it can be fixed easily by moving the market back to its old location. At the current location new visitors to our town will not find the market - a few signs do not cut it."

Tuesdays are a busy day for Haliburton thanks to the market in the spring and summer months.

Council also expressed their worries about parking and traffic at the original location.

"That's a concern for downtown businesses during what is supposed to be the busiest season of the year. The location helps the market, and the market helps the downtown," Townsend said. "We are aware that there's parking issues and traffic issues, but it's summer. We're only there for four hours once a week. That's 36 hours total all summer."

He said he's heard from many customers with mobility issues that they relied on the accessibility of Head Lake Park.

"And when Rotary Beach Park rains, it floods horribly," he added.

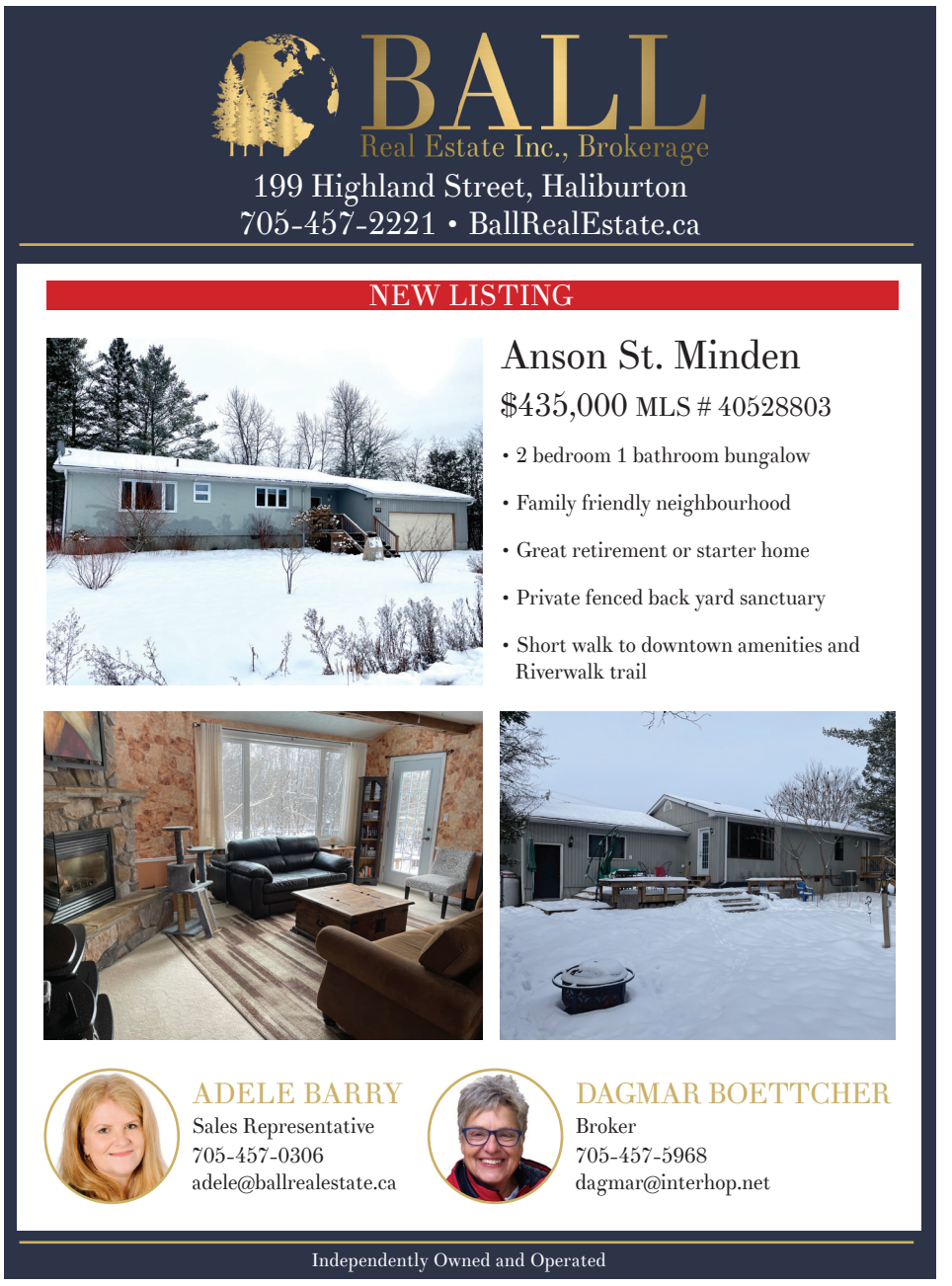
Nash said close access to the new washrooms at the welcome centre in Head Lake Park is also essential to the market.

"Providing sanitary washroom access is critical," he said.

Many vendors are waiting to hear, for certain, where the Haliburton market will be located this year.

"We aren't sure who is going to come back if we can't move back to our original location. If we lose 80 per cent of vendors, we won't have a market," Townsend said.

"It's important to us. It's an important community cultural event, and it needs to be there," Nash said.



Highlands East forecasts 2024 capital needs

JAMES MATTHEWS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The departmental overview and list of capital needs in Highlands East is long and detailed.

Township council got an idea of the municipality's 2024 capital forecast during its regular meeting Jan. 9. Brittany McCaw, the CAO and treasurer, said the information presented to council will be compiled into the preliminary 2024 municipal budget that will be presented to council in February.

"The projects and initiatives that are being put forth today in front of council were derived from needs that were identified through various corporate plans and documents," McCaw said.

Those plans and documents included the municipal asset management plan, roads needs studies, building condition assessments, organizational reviews, along with departmental needs and priorities and also any council-driven priorities.

One of the biggest capital needs is the municipal office design and engineering. The money earmarked for that project is specific to the design and engineering portion.

The building's design is projected to cost between $200,000 and $250,000. Some of that money was set aside last year.

"I do know that there has been some discussion, some queries around the avenue that we're taking in order to get the design of the building come forward," McCaw said.

One suggestion is the possibility of having engineering students at one of the colleges take a swing at the building's design. But, given that a municipal office building is considered to be of a complicated design, it's required to be designed by a certified architect.

If students were to be enlisted, their work would have to be vetted by an architectural and engineering firm and then revised accordingly, she said.

"You've got to plan for the worst and hope for the best," Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall said of designing the building. "So putting $250,000 into a budget in the event that things don't work the way you want to make sense to me."

To not have a building constructed in 2025 doesn't make sense to him, he said.

Money for cyber security needs will have to be addressed, and the year's portion of funds for the 2026 election will need to be squirrelled away in a reserve purse.

Highlands East will spend $55,000 for an asset management plan that will meet new legislative requirements including a tally of all core and non-core infrastructure assets.

"And that identifies current levels of service and the cost of maintaining those levels of service," she said.

That includes identification of proposed service levels, what activities will be required to meet those proposed services levels, and a strategy to fund those activities, she said.

"Our current plan is compliant with the current legislation as we've included all municipal infrastructure assets," McCaw said. "But we have not identified the levels of service and the cost to maintain those for the non-core."

It's only been done for core assets, which are water and waste-water infrastructure, roads, and bridges.

Another project to be carried over from last year is the corporate strategic plan. To cover that, $30,000 will be transferred from reserve funds.

McCaw also listed the need for a records management system as a priority for the year.

"This is a beast of a project and it's going to take a lot of time and effort to bring all of the different departments on board with this program," she said.

It's "cumbersome" and will likely take many years to complete, given the size of Highlands East, she said.

Colin McKnight, the chief building official, presented his $30,000 wish list that included water remediation and accessibility needs. Another priority for his department is the replacement of some vehicles.

In bylaw enforcement, McCaw said the two officers share on vehicle. Money will be set aside for a second vehicle in the future.

Fire Chief Chris Baughman said the $40,000 allocated last year for a fire master plan will be carried forward to this year. He said the plan will be completed later this summer.

Other than annual equipment purchases, many capital needs and projects for the department hinge on the master plan's completion, he said.

Other departments to present their capital forecasts were Parks, Recreation, and Facilities; Planning; Roads; Waste; and Water and Wastewater.

McCaw said the municipality is looking at a net capital increase over 2023 of $239,759, which is about 10 per cent more than last year.

"That doesn't mean that, moving into the preliminary budget, we're going to have a 10 per cent increase," McCaw said. "You're looking at your capital projects, so we won't know final numbers until the whole budget has been prepared and put together."

Council will debate items in the 2024 capital and operational budget in February.

"That asset management plan is really sort of driving a lot of our financial decisions," McCaw said. "And it's becoming more apparent and imperative that we really start taking a hard look at some of our dollars and where it's going."

She said the township is fortunate to have had sound financial planning in years past. That good planning has yielded health reserve funds.

"In no way, shape, or form do I want to see us utilize all of our reserves to fund these projects," she said.

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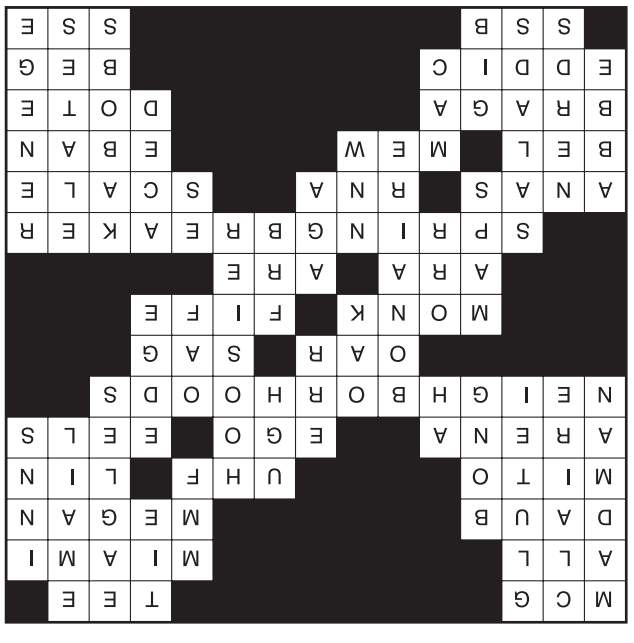

Home is where the heart is; Ingram takes on county tourism

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Staff Reporter

If there's one thing that Haliburton County has no shortage of, it's stories.

And in the role of tourism manager, Angelica Ingram plans to celebrate all the stories that make our community alive, thrive, and vibrant.

"There's a lot of really great stuff happening in this community," said Ingram, "and I just want to build on all of that."

Originally hailing from Richmond Hill, Ingram came to the county in 2009, freshly finished her degree in journalism, and ready to tackle the role of reporter with the *Haliburton Echo*. "I loved the idea of writing for a small town newspaper in cottage country," she said. "My parents laughed and said I would never stay, but I'm still here!"

Ingram spent nine years at the newspaper, during which time she completely immersed herself into the community as a whole. "I had never been to Haliburton before," she said, "but I immediately fell in love with it. Loved the people, loved the community, and I had formed way more connections in my short time here than I had ever made back in the city."

Upon having her first daughter, Ingram pivoted in her life to find a career that gave her some flexibility to spend more time with her young family. She began working part-time for SIRCH Community Services as their communications and marketing coordinator. "This gave me the opportunity to really hear more stories from the community, and celebrate the different services available in the county," she told the *Echo*.

County tourism manager Angelica Ingram is no stranger to community economic development, and she hopes to incorporate her years of personal experiences into the role. /EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

During her time at SIRCH, Ingram became involved with the Haliburton BIA. "That was really my first taste of economic development and tourism," she said, "and I really loved it. I loved seeing everything our community could do, and was doing, and that really became my area of interest."

After five years at SIRCH and two with the BIA, Ingram spotted the job posting for the manager of tourism with Haliburton County. "They were big shoes to fill," noted Ingram, referencing the people who had held the position prior to her: Tracie Bertrand and Amanda Shultz, who each made their mark on the county tourism scene before moving on to new opportunities.

"I may have a lot to learn about tourism," said Ingram, "but I do know about this county."

Ingram hopes to offer a new spin on the position; something that reflects her own journey and relationship with the community. "I came here 15 years ago as a young, single person, and now I am married with kids," she said. "I want to bring that young, family perspective to the role. Keeping things in mind like recreation and events for families, because that is all part of our economic development."

Ingram noted that the local industry is just as crucial as marketing to tourists, as they make up the economy the majority of the year. She is eager to develop initiatives and campaigns that celebrate local audiences, and work with stakeholders to support events that cater to families all year round; particularly during shoulder seasons. "I love to see all the events happening here that appeal to all different demographics," she said, "and I would love to watch those things grow."

While Ingram has been in the role for just one short month so far, she knows she has her work cut out for her, and that the tourism world isn't always rainbows and sunshine.

"I know it's not easy to be positive when your entire livelihood and business is dependent on weather, and the limited disposable income of tourists," she said. "I want us to all try to work together, and find ways to market to all different tourism markets so that we all benefit."

Through it all, Ingram noted that there are numbers and statistics affiliated with this type of position, and while she recognizes the value in those analytics, she firmly believes that the core of the position is to have your heart in the community. The stories, the people, the day-to-day lives of our stakeholders and friends.

"This is what I believe in," she said. "You have to have your heart in this place, and I know I do. I'm not going anywhere. My roots are here, and this is my home."

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in Dysart et al
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• Haliburton Welcome Centre
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points of view

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A young male Fisher. by Tammy Nash

Editorial

Pivoting winter tourism

vivian collings

Will Haliburton winters ever be the same?

It's a question we're all asking.

"The answer is blowin' in the wind."

It's not an elusive fact that times are changing. Weather is changing. The climate… is changing.

Haliburton County Snowmobile Association hasn't been able to open trails yet.

All Haliburton Nordic Trails are now open, and Sir Sam's just opened the far side of the hill this weekend thanks to the Arctic blast from the past few days.

Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve just opened their trails, minus passes over lakes.

I've only just seen a couple of fish huts on small lakes.

The Earth is warming - rapidly.

Some hard truths:

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Ice sheets and glaciers are melting, sea levels are rising.

2023 saw the warmest December for many parts of Ontario in the past 100 years.

The weekend's winter storm has brought a sigh of relief to these businesses and countless others.

Restaurants, stores, resorts, gas stations.

But looking at the stats above, it's unclear how much longer we can depend on big snowstorms in the winter to bring us what we need.

Living in a destination town means nearly all businesses here depend on tourism.

For a long time, Haliburton's tourism has depended on climate.

Four seasons means we can take advantage of all of them in different ways.

We have such a strong tourism sector in the county because of it.

A team of people works behind the scenes to work on that specific topic, day in and out.

I recently sat down with a couple of them to chat about the future.

Angelica Ingram, Haliburton County Tourism director and Thom Lambert, social media and content creator for the Tourism and Economic Development Department, used one main word to describe the future of winter tourism if temperatures continue on the uphill climb: Pivot.

"This year, so many businesses and organizations have had to pivot. They thought outside the box for the past month about how they can still offer experiences in the county without snow," Ingram said. "And at the tourism department, we're making similar plans for the coming years, should we continue to see less snow and late ice freezing."

To our surprise, Haliburton County was still filled with visitors during the winter holidays.

"I think people just pivoted, they found different things to do. They went shopping, had cozy nights in at their cottage, went out to restaurants, participated in family activities offered by so many places here," she said.

The challenge is finding what sticks for each individual organization after depending on a long winter for so many years in the County.

And of course, as a community, it's always important to do what we can to help.

Buy passes for Nordic skiing, Sir Sam's, HCSA, and Haliburton Forest.

Eat out one night a week with family or friends if it's feasible for you.

Visit Winterdance Dogsled Tours this winter.

Have a staycation at one of the resorts.

It's up to us to help out winter organizations during this shorter season.

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Our road

Coming and going

Down

sharon lynch

GARY COULD barely see the road ahead. Snow was coming at him sideways, swirling around the car like a teasing cape that occasionally opened enough for him to catch a glimpse of what lay behind it. More white. He tried not to clutch the steering wheel too tightly so he could respond quickly if needed as conditions revealed themselves.

What a trip. Going out of town today was the last thing he wanted to do. Over-eating and under-sleeping over the holidays was still playing out in his body. It did not make for a comfortable ride to his destination. His brother's birthday meant there would be more eating and less sleeping.

With such a large family, birthdays and anniversaries were always busy and demanding for Gary. While he enjoyed getting together with siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles, it was exhausting. So much to catch up on, so much food and drink and especially – so much driving. The weather forecast had not been reassuring, and while his relatives always gave him permission to stay home if necessary, Gary hated missing these occasions.

There would be little ones running between the kitchen, living and dining rooms, building the connections with each other that would last a lifetime. They just didn't know it yet. But Gary knew because that was how his family was. Close knit and caring. He wanted to know how George's health was, any news on Sara's difficult pregnancy and what was Dan's new girlfriend like?

So he drove. Through snow, wind and hard-to-see roads, he kept going, trusting that if he was careful, he'd get there safe and sound with a present on the backseat.

Myrna was waiting. Gary was supposed to have been there by now and she kept looking out the window. It was very white out there. She hadn't said anything to the others because she was afraid if she did, that would make her fears turn into facts. A car upside-down in the ditch. Maybe even blood on the snow. She tried to block the images and have another glass of wine as she chatted with Aunt Dorothy.

Myrna had worked hard to get the house in shape for this gathering. Birthdays were very special for her. After those early years, these times sometimes felt like a dream. The big house furnished to perfection. Soft lights, flowers and today there was birthday food crowding the table and overflowing onto the kitchen counter. Those days of a chilly little house and thrift store gifts were long gone but still etched into her memory.

Then when her life turned around, she was never quite able to shake the feeling that it was temporary, that soon she'd be found out as some kind of imposter who didn't deserve all that she now had.

So she worked extra hard to prove herself worthy. Which she knew was ridiculous and made no sense, but still the feeling was there. Family gatherings were her time to give thanks to fate and family for getting her through the hard years.

Gary was a big help. No matter where she lived, he always made it for a visit. He'd pull into the driveway, honking to announce his arrival. The kids would quickly run outside to help him carry in 'the goodies'. For he never came empty-handed. Food and fun. He said that's what family gatherings were all about and he provided plenty of both.

Myrna had never forgot. So she always made sure there was an extra slice of cake or whatever they were having, saved for him. And the chocolate wrapped in foil she made that he said tasted like heaven. The little guys loved hearing him say that when he closed his eyes and bit into it.

Now something was happening at the front door and yes, Gary had arrived. Dusted with snow, tired lines around the eyes but a big grin of pleasure as he started hugging everyone greeting him at the door.

Now the real celebrations could begin, Myrna smiled. Gary had arrived.

points of view

Measuring up

steve galea

Loon Tales

I AM NOT the kind of person who is particularly knowledgeable or adept at tool use.

If I'm going to be honest, I'd rank myself slightly more capable than a sewer rat and not quite as skilled as most feral monkeys.

Having said that, I do know a few things. For instance, I am certain that a tape measure is not – and should never be – a tool you can rely on in hand-to-hand combat or to cut down a tree with.

This belief was shaken the other day however, when I unfurled an old tape measure and cut my index finger on the edge of the metal tape.

Before I go further, let me ease your mind by saying I am recovering as well as can be expected. I am not one of those people who makes a big deal out of potentially debilitating injuries such as this one. But, I will say, had that cut been one inch deeper, I could have lost a finger. Which would have been tragic, especially for me.

You see, despite all evidence to the contrary, I am a writer. And that means I make my living by using my fingers. Not for writing, so much – you can do that with voice-activated features these days. No, I need my fingers to use a coffee mug efficiently and to snack on finger foods, which, as any writer worth their salt will tell you, is 95 percent of the process. The other five percent is utilized by pointing one finger up in the air and yelling, "Eureka!" when inspiration strikes.

Had I lost that finger – and remember I was a mere inch away from doing so – I would have had to rely on a sippy straw for the rest of my life and would have had to learn how to eat finger foods and yell "Eureka", using the index finger on my wrong hand.

And that's no way to live.

Did I mention that there was blood loss? Because there was. I did my best to ensure it was understated, however, since I didn't want Jenn to faint while tending to my boo boo. There was no point in both of us doing so.

Listen, I get that the words "hero" and "courageous" probably come to mind right now, but there's no need for that. Save it, for when I pass you on the street or we next meet at the Kevlar glove section of our favourite store.

Besides, this isn't about me. It's about you reading about me.

But it is about much more than that too.

My sincere hope is that this column will serve as a public service regarding the dangers of measuring things – especially height and girth. Whenever you are tempted to do those things, you have to ask yourself: Is this really worth risking life and limb over?

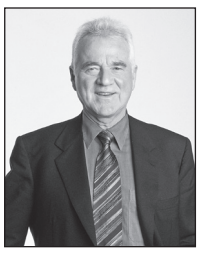
I know what you are thinking. Statistically, there are very few tape measure-related deaths. But, I say, even if there was almost one, that is one too many.

That's why I am hoping that this column and the awareness it creates, will bring that number down to zero.

Again, as tempting as it may be, go easy on the hero thing. It is probably undeserved. Plus, based on my past experience, I'm not really sure I can measure up.

The Principles of an Economic Charter of Rights

Should Canada adopt Argentina's chainsaw approach to government spending?



frank stronach

Principles

LAST MONTH, voters in Argentina elected as their new President a political outsider who promised to inflict painful shock therapy to the nation's stagnant economy and who carried a chainsaw to campaign rallies as a dramatic symbol of his plan to slash the size of government.

Javier Milei was supported by fed-up voters who were tired of decades of government mismanagement and economic interference that resulted in growing poverty, out-of-control debt, and sky-high inflation running at about 120 per cent.

Last week, on his very first day in office, the gruff, straight-shooting Milei made good on his promise to take a chainsaw to the government bureaucracy by cutting the number of government ministries in half, from 18 to 9.

As part of his "chainsaw plan" to shrink the size of government and reduce the country's suffocating bureaucracy, Milei also wants to make massive cuts to government spending during his first year in office that total about 15 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), or tens of billions of dollars.

Could the same scenario ever take place here in Canada one day?

A growing number of Canadians worry that our country is on a fast track to becoming Argentina of the North on account of our own mushrooming debt and gorilla-sized government bureaucracy that keeps getting larger.

But the key difference is that Argentina was left with little choice but to enact extreme measures. Canada, however, still has time to get our spending under control, bring down our debt, and reduce the size of our bloated bureaucracy.

During the past year I've advocated for the adoption of a new national Canadian Economic Charter of Rights and Responsibilities. One of the key principles in the economic charter is a gradual reduction of government spending amounting to 5 percent per year over a 10-year period.

Instead of Argentina's brutal chainsaw approach, the method spelled out in the economic charter would be measured and would cause the least amount of disruption possible while still bringing down spending and reducing the size of our government.

The reduction would be achieved by imposing an immediate freeze on the hiring of any new government workers, as well as implementing a policy of not replacing employees who leave or retire.

But for this plan to work, we have to start downsizing now – not ten years from today.

The build-up of government bureaucracy is already clogging up the arteries of commerce and eroding Canadian living standards – and it will only grow worse in the years ahead.

The gradual reductions I've proposed to government spending over the period of a decade are doable, realistic and would cause minimal disruption.

But if we keep running deficits, racking up debt and expanding our government bureaucracy, we'll be left with no other choice than the same sort of desperate measures that Argentina is taking.

Argentina didn't become an economic basket case overnight – they got to this point after two decades of disastrous economic policies and reckless government spending.

If we don't sort out our country's financial affairs now, then a few years down the road we'll be the ones taking a chainsaw to our overgrown bureaucracy – and it will be a lot messier and a lot more painful.

To learn more about the economic charter and how it could generate economic growth and prosperity, email me at info@economiccharter.ca. Or to learn more about the economic charter, visit: www.economiccharter.ca.

Frank Stronach is the founder of Magna International Inc., one of Canada's largest global companies, and was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame.

fstronachlpc@gmail.com

letters to the editor

Stop feeding deer

To the Editor,

In 2023 Dysart council passed a new bylaw, 2023-98, that prohibits the year round feeding of deer in Ward One and parts of Ward Two in the Municipality of Dysart.

If you are in violation of this bylaw you can be given a $150 Provincial Offences Act fine and a $100 municipal administrative penalty. In 2023 the Stop Dear Feeding Property Owners Coalition, made up of many local residents, created a petition and canvassed the village for support. The vast majority of residents were in favour of this ban.

As stated in our presentation to council, "public awareness" of this bylaw is critical to the success of reducing the urban deer population.

Some people who fed deer in the past have now stopped. Through the bylaw process, and information presented from highly regarded scientific and government institutions and professional wildlife managers, they and others are now better educated on all the negative aspects of feeding deer.

It is important to note that ultimately, the bylaw is dependant on enforcement which is complaint based. So, the purpose of this letter is to inform residents who observe people in violation of the bylaw or who may not be aware of the ban, on how to deal with these occurrences.

If you see that someone in the area covered by the bylaw is feeding deer there is a simple form on the municipal website, dysartetal.ca where you can report this. Once on the site at the top of the page click on Report a Concern, then fill out the online complaint form and submit.

You can also just call 705-457-1740 and ask for bylaw enforcement.

To see this bylaw, restrictions and coverage area go to the municipal website dysartetal.ca

The Coalition is confidant that awareness and enforcement of this ByLaw will lead to a deer herd that is more in balance with it's natural habitat. This will result in reducing the many conflicts we are currently experiencing.

Thank you.

Chris Bishop,
Haliburton

pic *of the* past

This week's pic of the past offers an innovative solution for milk delivery when snowed in! This photo, taken circa 1940, is of Katharine Stouffer outside the family home in Minden on the Gull River. Katharine holds a crate with glass bottles in it, with a dog under her other arm. This is how milk was delivered because their road wasn't plowed./FILE

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Patti Lou Robinson presents at the beginning of Those Other Movies on Thursday, Jan. 11. /BRITNEY PAGLIUCA Staff

What's love got to do with it?

BRITNEY PAGLIUCA
Staff Reporter

Those Other Movies (TOM), a proud part of the Haliburton County Community Co-Operative, hosted their monthly screening at The Northern Lights Pavilion at 4:15 and 7:15 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 11. Outside the theatre, community members eagerly gathered by the dozen to watch a cross-cultural love story on the big screen, setting a romantic mood for the soon-arriving Valentine's Day.

Committee members of TOM selected *What's Love Got to Do with It?*, a magnetic, colourful love story, set in London, England, and Lahore, Pakistan that challenges preconceived notions of love and marriage.

The story revolves around two lifelong friends and next-door neighbours, Zoe and Kaz, each with contrasting notions of the perfect marital match. Zoe, played by the stunning Lily James, is a documentary filmmaker, who decides to make her friend Kaz the muse of her next film project when she discovers he is embarking on an arranged marriage journey.

Rather than being coerced by his parents, Kaz is motivated by his own desire to find his perfect match with the help of those who know him best. He believes one should walk into love instead of falling for it – that a relationship is built on commitment, not destiny. But his best friend Zoe disagrees. How is love supposed to last without burning passion and desire?

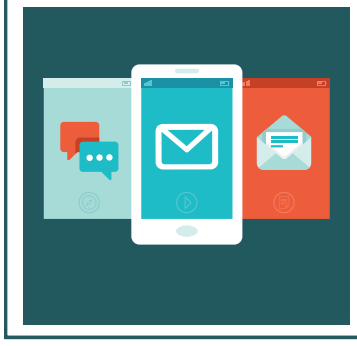
Throughout the film, the two best friends debate romance and love and what it all means. While feelings are hurt and lessons learned, viewers can't help but notice the pair's bubbling chemistry. But they'll have to look past their differences before they can see their friendship as a potential for something more.

When their relationships fail, our two protagonists learn that within their ideas of what makes for a successful partnership, there lies a middle ground – that love needs to simmer before it can boil, but you still need the right ingredients.

In the end – if you couldn't already guess it – Kaz and Zoe get together. Like many others in our small town, they found that one often does not have to look too far for love. That sometimes, it is right at our doorstep.

When movie presenters had technical difficulties setting up the film, we saw firsthand what love had to do with it. It was love and kindness that brought a volunteer to drive to the theatre with an extra projector. It was love and empathy that called on viewers to express their understanding when the 4:15 screening was cancelled. It was love and dedication that brought TOM members out to restaurants to inform community members that they were back on for the 7:15 screening.

After the movie, you could hear the chatter of patrons discussing the film and sense their gratitude towards TOM, who once again selected a crowd-pleaser. TOM is bringing community members together and out of the house in the cold winter season for an inexpensive opportunity to view diverse films. They allow us to watch a wide range of films for only ten dollars, share our thoughts and discuss the films with others in the community while meeting new friends and having a good time.



Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
vivian@haliburtonpress.com

April 2023 Year in Review

COVID assessment centre closes

With a reduction in demand for services at Community Assessment Centres across the province and current testing guidance, the Haliburton County COVID-19 Assessment Centre in Haliburton closed its doors.

Occurrence owners move on

It was the end of an era for the Occurrence owners Brigitte Gall and Michael Bainbridge as they headed off to pursue a new adventure in Ottawa.

Bainbridge was offered the position of assistant collections manager for mineralogy at the Canadian Museum of Nature. The unique job opportunity meant that the couple and their children relocated to a new community after many years in Haliburton County.

County celebrates National Volunteer Week

The community came together to recognize and appreciate all its volunteers that help make not-for-profit organizations and initiatives a reality with their hard work from Apr. 16 to 22, 2023.

New concert venue comes to town

The opening of the Music Room, a 150-seat intimate concert venue located inside Castle Antiques & Cafe, was announced in April 2023.

"We are thrilled to be opening The Music Room at the Castle. Our goal is to provide a vibrant and dynamic venue for musicians and music lovers to come together and share the love of music in a great sounding and intimate setting. With the support of our community, we look forward to helping to build a successful and long-lasting music scene here in Haliburton," said Music Room managers.

Walleye count takes place on Drag River

Volunteers with the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association (HHOA) of going to Head Lake Park at sundown to count reflecting gold eyes in the shallows of the Drag River in an effort to see walleye numbers climb.

Minden ER closure announced

Haliburton Highlands Health Services announced the Minden emergency room doors would be closing permanently on June 1, 2023.

As of that date, all emergency services will be operating out of the Haliburton Hospital. "This is really related to our health human resource crisis," said Carolyn Plummer, president and CEO of HHHS at the time. "It is a global health human resource crisis, it's been ongoing for quite some time, and it has meant a shortage of both nursing and medical staff."

Plummer emphasized that this closure is based solely on staffing rather than funding; recruitment is the persistent struggle looming over most rural communities.

The Haliburton Legion was full of hungry attendees of the HHOA Wild Game Dinner and Auction in April of 2023. /TIMOTHY YANO

Mitch Stephens throws a rock for his team to sweep during the Chester Spiel held at the Haliburton Curling Club in honour of Chester Howse. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

Madame Zahab's Grade 2 students cleaned up litter during their Earth Day clean up on Friday, April 21, 2023 at Stuart Baker Elementary School. /Submitted by Marie Zahab

Abbey Garden's Easter at the Gardens Isat April 8, 2023 was a huge success. /Submitted

Former blacksmith graduate Richard Sears provides a demonstration on Saturday, April 15, 2023 at Fleming College's Haliburton School of Art + Design's annual open house, giving potential students and their families a glimpse inside the campus. Visitors were able to see a variety of demonstrations, including glass blowing and blacksmith, while touring the campus. Guided tours and information about financial services and campus life were also provided on Saturday. /ADAM FRISK

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May 2023 Year in Review

Old growth forest in HF receives conservation status

Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve lead the way for other private forests by becoming the first commercially-owned forest to receive conservation status in Canada.

After partnering with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), the 20 hectare, South Freezy Lake old growth area owned by HFWR is now in the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas database and considered an other effective area-based conservation measure (OECM), contributing to the country's goal of protecting 30 per cent of lands and waters by 2030.

Eighteen housing units proposed to Dysart council

Hot Pond Enterprises Corporation wants to undertake a medium density development consisting of 18 dwelling units in Haliburton. The plan is for three buildings of six apartments per building to be built over three phases.

The property for the proposed development is at the corner of Victoria Street and Maple Avenue. The buildings will be serviced by a private water system and municipal sewer system.

HHHS releases consolidation plan details

Tensions were high in the Haliburton County Council chamber as CEO and president of Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) Carolyn Plummer and HHHS board chair David O'Brien met with council for a special meeting on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 to go over details of the plan to consolidate the Minden Emergency Department with Haliburton.

Canadian Independent Bookstore Day was celebrated at Master's Bookstore in Haliburton where local authors gathered to read excerpts from their works and encouraged visitors to enter a draw to win a basket of local literature and participate in brainstorming the first chapter of a new Haliburton novel. From left, local writer Janet Trull stands with Master's Bookstore owner Kathy Stouffer and other local authors Marie Gage, Brenda Peddigrew, and Kathy Purc. /VIVIAN COLLINGS

Singer- songwriter Marshall Dane performed at a sold-out house on Saturday, May 6, 2023 in Haliburton at the newly minted The Music Room at the Castle. /ADAM FRISK

The Haliburton County Junior NBA Youth Basketball program took place in the Archie Stouffer Elementary School gym on Tuesdays and the Haliburton Highlands Secondary School on Wednesdays. The season ended on May 31, 2023. /TIM YANO

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School Grade 12 Students Emmerson Wilson and Avery Horner placed second at the COSSA badminton tournament, earning them a spot in the OFSAA tournament from May 11 to 13. /VIVIAN COLLINGS

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School seniors got dressed up on Saturday, May 27, 2023 for their prom at the Pinestone Resort and Conference Centre. Pictured, Caden Harnum (left), Kelly Chumbley, Nicole Long and Addison Sullivan pose for a photo upon arrival to prom on Saturday. /ADAM FRISK special to the *Echo*

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June 2023 Year in Review

Minden ER closes

The Minden hospital Emergency Room permanently closed its doors on June 1, 2023.

Farmers' Market announces new locations for Haliburton and AH

Both the Haliburton and Stanhope market were to have new locations for 2023 while the one in Minden remained the same.

"The market in Haliburton on Tuesdays from noon until 4 p.m. has moved to Rotary Park, formerly at Head Lake. It just moved over the bridge to 2 Park St. off Maple Ave./Hwy 118," explained Haliburton County Farmers Market Association manager, Lauren Phillips. The move was based on a council decision.

The market that was previously at Stanhope moved to Abbey Gardens.

Wildfires affect county air quality

Dr. Natalie Bocking, medical officer of health and CEO at the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit, said last week the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks air quality health index uses data from 39 air monitoring stations and declared poor air quality due to forest fires.

"The current smoke plumes from forest fires throughout Ontario and Quebec are leading to worsening air quality, moving the air quality health index to high risk," Bocking said. "For those who may be at risk due to other health reasons we are advising you to please prioritize your health by reducing your exposure."

Health Canada advised that people who work outdoors, the pregnant, elderly, and those people with other pre-existing health conditions should be mindful of air quality.

High levels of air pollution had blanketed swaths of North America from out-of-control forest fires in northern Ontario and Quebec. Fires also burned in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and the Northwest Territories.

Haliburton Lake requests air ambulance pad

The Haliburton Lake Cottagers Association lobbied Dysart council to allow them to put an air ambulance helipad on a piece of the old roadside pit on Haliburton Lake Road that has been turned into a waste material dumping ground.

Dysart council agreed to have staff report back on the feasibility of the emergency helicopter landing site.

Haliburton Highlands Challenge kicks off

It was an afternoon of moving stories, high energy and a lot of lime green T-shirts as the Abbey Retreat Centre held the official launch of their fourth annual Haliburton Highlands Challenge at the end of June 2023.

Over the next few months, friends and supporters of the Abbey Retreat Centre's cancer support programs will be got active and invited the community donate in support of their retreats and online programs that serve people across Ontario who are living with cancer.

Left, Julia Bramham performs in *I Just Can't Wait to be King* as a part of the recreational musical theatre class during Skyline Dance's recital. /TIM YANO

Eagle Lake cottagers Christine Whitley and Steven Whitley pose with Sir Sam's Ski/Ride food and beverage director Owen Duhaime on Saturday at Haliburton's annual Home and Cottage Show whcih took place from June 2 to 4. /ADAM FRISK

Local ballerina heads to England for summer

Sydney Parish, a 16-year-old Haliburton ballet dancer, headed off to England for the summer and Alberta for her senior year of high school.

Sydney was asked to go to the two-week summer intensive at English National Ballet, a company located in London while also accepting a year scholarship to head to the Alberta Ballet dance school in the fall of 2023.

Below, Katrina Schouten delivers the valedictorian address at the HSA+D convocation.

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‘Slàinte Mhaith’ in the name of Robbie Burns

VIVIAN COLLINGS
Editor

The Haliburton Highlanders Pipes and Drums headed the Robbie Burns festivities on Saturday, Jan. 21 at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 129. The band hopes to be able to have a larger celebration to invite the public to the event next year. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

Translating to “good health” from Gaelic, the famous 18th century Scottish poet and a ploughman will soon be toasted by Highlanders on Jan. 20.

Robbie Burns Night in the Highlands has been a longstanding tradition since the 70s.

The Haliburton Legion will be filled with the sound of bagpipes as tartans line walls and drape over tabletops.

Scottish fare, most importantly a haggis, will be brought in to sustain dancing and to be paired with drams of Scotch.

Robert, “Robbie”, Burns wrote over 550 poems in his short life.

He lived 5,000 kilometres away in Ayrshire, Edinburgh, and Dumfriesshire, Scotland nearly three centuries ago.

But one Highlands resident explained, it’s what lies within Burns’ poems that dissolves the distance.

It’s the reason for celebrating.

We may not be ploughmen living in cottages with our cattle, but key social struggles still present today were at the forefront of many of his humorous poems.

“He was born into a poor family, but he had a great mind,” said local piper Jim Thomson. “His father made sure he got an education when many other children around him didn’t.”

Thomson is a Scot through and through, but has been living in Canada for the past 50 years.

He lived less than 20 minutes from one of Burns’ homes near the west coast.

Thomson overturned pages in books from his personal library on Burns as he described the poet’s life.

“The illustrator of this book taught at Glasgow School of Art while I was attending,” Thomson said briefly.

He paused at a poem called A Man’s a Man for All That.

“It’s all to do with social structure. If you were born into a rich family, then you were obviously better off in society. In spite of all that, Robert Burns was born into a poor family, and he was able to find great success because of his mind,” Thomson said. “Even though he didn’t have a lot of money, ‘A man’s a man for all that,’ he still became a great man.”

One page of a book of history on Burns was bookmarked.

On the page, the name “Judge Haliburton” was highlighted, a reference to Thomas Chandler Haliburton, the very man of which Haliburton county gets its name.

“There was a centenary hosted 100 years after the birth of Robert Burns. All of the important people around went to this celebration, and judge Haliburton was one of them,” Thomson said.

Thomson himself has been celebrating Burns since he was a “wee one”.

“I learned to play the bagpipes at 10, and our pipe band always played at Burns suppers,” he said.

He remembers the 200th anniversary of Burns’ birth while attending university.

“They had a display of his work, and the one that stuck out to me was the original version of A Red, Red Rose. His penmanship was beautiful.”

Thompson will be giving the Address to a Haggis, an important part of every Burns celebration before the haggis is eaten.

“Usually, the lower class worked on farms that didn’t belong to them, which meant the animals didn’t belong to them, either. People like Robert Burns and his family would get the leftovers from the Lords. Whatever was left over was made into haggis,” Thomson explained.

Any meat would be ground, added to oats and spices, and boiled in a sheep’s bladder.

Thomson recited the poem, pausing after every verse to translate to modern English.

It’s filled with wit and read with great enthusiasm.

Tickets for Robbie Burns Night in the Highlands can be purchased at the Haliburton Legion, Canoe FM, and from local Haliburton Highlanders Pipes and Drums band members

HSF 2024 Live Theatre!
Highlands Summer Festival

2024 Audition Invitation

The Highlands Summer Festival is holding auditions for the following 2024 productions:

- **The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (a musical)**
- **The Miracle Worker**
- **The Birds & the Bees**

Saturday, January 27, from 10 a.m.
Sunday, January 28, from 12:30 p.m.

at **St. George’s Anglican Church**
617 Mountain Street, Haliburton

Character descriptions and other important details, including how to register, can be found in the audition package, linked from the HSF home page at **www.highlandssummerfestival.on.ca**

County, Kawartha Lakes revisit social, housing pact

JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Haliburton County and the City of Kawartha Lakes made some minor tweaks to their social and housing agreement.

Gary Dyke, the county’s chief administrative officer and clerk, updated council when it met Jan. 10 on changes made to the joint social and housing services agreement with the City of Kawartha Lakes.

The County of Haliburton contracts the provision of social and housing services to the City of Kawartha Lakes.

The county has received contract services from the City of Kawartha Lakes since 2001. Before that, social and housing services were provided by the former County of Victoria.

Successor agreements have been executed between the county and the city in 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016.

The regular five-year review of the agreement was delayed since 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The current review of the service agreement was conducted through the Joint advisory committee comprised of representatives from the City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County.

Staff conducted a comprehensive review of the 2016 agreement and have proposed minor changes to reflect legislative updates, signing authorities, and current practices. The City of Kawartha Lakes adopted the revised agreement on Dec. 12, 2023.

A new Article 3 was added to the agreement to provide a clear outline of the role and responsibilities of the Consolidated Service Manager.

Article 6, the Cost Sharing and Funding Formula, was amended to specifically identify the cost sharing of child services to the county at 16 per cent of administrative costs.

“There’s some clarity on some funding pieces,” Dyke said. “There was one which was open-ended on child services, which has now been prescribed a percentage of administrative costs, which I think is better for us in the administration of the agreement.”

And Article 9, the Annual Budget Estimate, deleted the Dec. 31 fixed date and was replaced with a reference to “early Q4” to align with budget preparation timelines. The impact of a municipal election year on the providing of budget estimates was also included in the revised agreement.

Councillor Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills, said the current makeup of the joint advisory committee has shown a deeper interest in local social issues.

“There’s an awful lot going on in this area,” he said. “And all of it is right now a bit difficult. There’s a shortage of housing and housing is a big part of it. There’s a shortage of childcare spaces and childcare is part of all this.

“And there is a shortage of support people and professionals in a lot of the other areas of social services in the county and in the city.”

Everybody is working together to try to improve the situation, he said.

“If we were doing this on our own, we would not be able to have the services and the quality of people that the city has,” Carter said.

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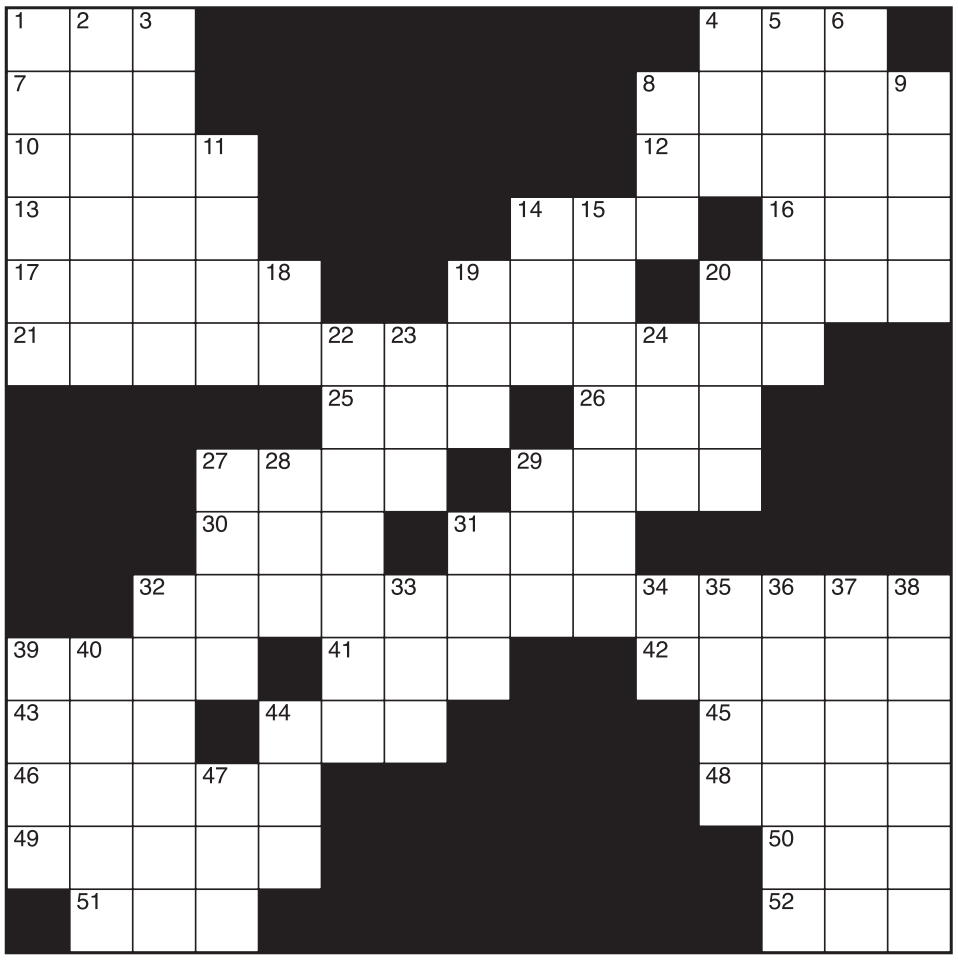

CLUES ACROSS
1. Microgram
4. Where golfers begin
7. Each
8. Warm weather metropolis
10. Coat with sticky substance
12. Girl's given name
13. Myth (Spanish)
14. Ultrahigh frequency
16. Former NBAer Jeremy
17. Where rockers work
19. Your consciousness of your own identity
20. Soft-finned fishes
21. Localities
25. Paddle
26. Union
27. Member of religious community
29. Small shrill flute
30. Small constellation in the Milky Way
31. They __
32. College kid on vacation
39. de Armas and Gasteyer are two
41. Part of the human body
42. A progressive grading
43. Sound unit
44. Noise some birds make
45. Abba __, Israeli politician
46. Portuguese city
48. Be extremely, uncritically fond of
49. Resembling old Norse poems
50. Ask for out of extreme need
51. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
52. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN
1. An insane person
2. __ Boothe Luce, American author
3. Buttock muscles
4. Men's fashion accessory
5. "Hotel California" rockers
6. Electronic communication
8. Magnetomotive force (abbr.)
9. Hostelries
11. A way to resound
14. Exclamation: yuck!
15. A resident of Indiana
18. Exclamation of surprise
19. Make a mistake
20. Boundary
22. Antilles island
23. It's used to make furniture
24. Clod
27. They indicate where places are
28. Bobby __, NHL champ
29. Prints money
31. Honorable title (Turkish)
32. Appetizers
33. Midway between north and northwest
34. Spanish be
35. Breezed through
36. Grilled dishes
37. In a way, excites
38. Change mind
39. A French abbot
40. Popular candy
44. Partner to cheese
47. Wood or metal bolt

Answers on page 4

Hawks soar

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School's senior boy's basketball team took the win against Lindsay Collegiate Vocational Institute on Wednesday, Jan. 10 in the HHSS gym. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

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Poquito Loco is spicing up snow season

BRITNEY PAGLIUCA

Staff Reporter

The Ya Babys perform at the Music Room in Haliburton for the first Tacos and Tunes of 2024 on Friday, Jan. 12. /ADAM FRISK Special to the *Echo*

Since moving to Haliburton County, I quite often find myself thinking… "Only in Haliburton."

Like the time a man gave twenty dollars to the cashier at the grocery store to help pay for my groceries, just because I had a pleasant ten-minute conversation with him. Only in Haliburton.

Only in Haliburton have I ever found a shop that hosts musical performances, and sells antiques and local art, while serving tacos and coffee.

Castle Antiques and Café is, without a doubt, one of the most unique spaces in Haliburton. Large windows and a sunroom bring in stunning amounts of natural light. There seems to be an endless amount of seating – tables, chairs, sofas. The space is always filled with smiling faces, lively chatter, and people diligently working on their laptops.

It's where we meet to catch up with old friends or with local interest groups. It's where I host interviews and like to get my writing done. When introducing someone to the county, it's easily one of the first places I suggest for lunch.

In March 2023, Poquito Loco, a local taco shop, joined Castle Antiques and Café, enhancing the space's vibrance and forcing us to make the difficult decision when we stop there for lunch – fresh tacos or homemade baked goods?

And it's not just lunch anymore, either.

Poquito Loco has recently decided to introduce a breakfast menu, serving breakfast on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 a.m. and Sundays at 9 a.m. The menu features a Mexican-style breakfast including burritos and bowls, as well as avocado toast. "We've got eggs and chorizo sausage – everything is made fresh, just like all of our other menu items," Poquito Loco owner, Claudette Pitre, said.

With winter fully underway in the county, Poquito Loco is also hosting new events from Friday to Sunday that will make it difficult for you to want to stay in for the night.

Friday nights will see the return of "Tacos and Tunes", featuring The Ya Babys, five-dollar tacos and plenty of dancing from 6 – 9 p.m. Tacos and Tunes began before Poquito Loco moved into Castle Antiques and Café full-time, Pitre explains. The event was such a success that the owner decided to reintroduce it this winter.

Saturdays are for game night at Poquito Loco, and a special on nachos. Games include trivia and "Boom, Snap, Clap", and take place from 5 – 8 p.m.

On Sundays, Poquito Loco partners with The Music Room to host an open stage afternoon from 12 – 3 p.m., where all are welcome to come and showcase their musical talents. The Mexican restaurant will also have a special on their newest menu item – chilli bowls.

"The open stage is a very community-oriented event," said Craig Titus, who runs The Music Room with Mark Christiano. It provides community members with a space to share their talent and love of music with others, and for all to make more connections in the county, cultivating a deeper sense of gratitude.

The events will run every weekend, all winter long. "Our goal is to bring more people together, especially in the winter when they have a hard time getting out of the house," Pitre, said.

The partnership that Poquito Loco has created with Castle Antiques and Café has led to the growth of one of the most lively and diverse spaces in Haliburton.

"Both companies share the same vision," Pitre said, "to create a community gathering space and bring people together."

Their collaboration has created a unique and inviting atmosphere that encourages people to come together, celebrate music, enjoy delicious food and support other local artists. As someone who frequents this space, I cannot wait to see what else they have in store for us.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – January 15, 2024

The public is invited to a Public Information Centre (PIC) on the Haliburton Floodplain Mapping Project which is a Joint Initiative by the County of Haliburton, Ganaraska Conservation and Kawartha Conservation. The project is being funded in part by Natural Resources Canada's Flood Hazard Identification & Mapping Program (FHIMP).

Aiming to strengthen community resilience and safety, the County of Haliburton, in collaboration with the two conservation authorities, has initiated a vital study focused on preparing floodplain mapping for the Gull River and Burnt River systems. This initiative primarily seeks to enhance our understanding of flood risks within the County and to make our communities more resilient to flood risks.

Floodplain mapping plays a crucial role in guiding decisions related to safeguarding people and properties from natural hazards.

We cordially invite residents and other interested community members to a Public Information Centre. Here, attendees will have the opportunity to examine the study area, learn about how flood hazards are mapped, and engage in discussions with members of the project team. The community's participation in this event is highly encouraged. Final deliverables for this project are anticipated to be available this March.

The PIC is scheduled for Monday, January 29th, 2024, from 4:00pm to 8:00pm at the Minden Community Centre, located at 55 Parkside Street, Minden, ON, and will be held in Room 2.

For more information, please contact: Steve Stone, Director of Planning for the County of Haliburton, 11 Newcastle Street, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0, Phone: 705-286-1333 ext. 222

NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION
OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

Subsection 17 (34) of the *Planning Act*

County File No.: **4624-OPA-003**
Subject Lands: **the geographic Municipality of Dysart at el in its entirety**
Applicant: **Municipality of Dysart et al**

TAKE NOTICE: A complete application has been received by the County of Haliburton to amend the Official Plan of the Municipality of Dysart et al. This proposal will be posted for a 30-day public review and comment period until **February 14, 2024**. If you have any questions, or would like to submit your comments in writing, please do so to the County's Planning Department.

THE PURPOSE: The purpose and effect of the proposed amendment is to update the policies relating to additional dwelling units, the requirements for complete applications and the types of planning applications that require preconsultation with the Municipality, to strengthen the policy in response to recent changes to the Planning Act, which are designed to provide a range and mix of housing options and densities while streamlining the application process.

STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING: A statutory Public Meeting was held by the municipality on December 12, 2023 at the Council Chambers of the Municipality of Dysart et al. The Council of the Municipality of Dysart et al adopted the proposed Local Official Plan Amendment on December 12, 2023 by By-Law No. 2023-111.

REQUESTING NOTICE OF DECISION: If you wish to be notified of the decision of County Council in respect of the proposed local official plan amendment, you must make a written request to the Director of Planning, County of Haliburton.

Only individuals, corporations or public bodies may appeal a decision of the approval authority to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. A notice of appeal may not be filed by an unincorporated association or group. However, a notice of appeal may be filed in the name of an individual who is a member of the association or the group on its behalf.
No person or public body shall be added as a party to the hearing of the appeal unless, before the plan was adopted, the person or public body made oral submissions at a public meeting or written submissions to the council or, in the opinion of the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party.

GETTING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Additional information regarding the application is available for public inspection at the County of Haliburton Administrative Office during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dated at the Township of Minden Hills this 8th day of January 2024.

S. Stone, Director of Planning
County of Haliburton
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
Minden, Ontario, K0M 2K0

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570 NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on behalf of Felice Mueller application will be made to the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario for an Act to revive Qui Vive Island Club Inc. the Qui Vive Island Club Inc. Act 2023. The application may be considered by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Any person who has an interest in the application and who wishes to make submissions, for or against the application, to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs should notify, in writing, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A2. Dated at Portland, Oregon, USA, this 23rd day of November, 2023.FELICE MUELLER

FIND IT in the newspaper

540 COMING EVENTS

the arts council haliburton highlands

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday January 30, 2024
7 pm
Register on Eventbrite and join us on Zoom for a review of last year.
All are welcome to attend.
https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/agm-tickets-789134651987

Annual General Meeting
Minden Agricultural Society
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Saturday January 27, 2024
at 1 p.m. at the
Highland Hills United Church
21 Newcastle Street, Minden

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But nothing is the same.
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Whenever someone speaks your name.
Sad are the hearts that loved you,
Silent the tears that fall.
Living our lives without you,
Is the hardest part of all.
You did so many things for us
Your heart was kind and true.
When we needed someone
We could always count on you.
The special years will not return
When we were all together.
But with the love within our hearts
You walk with us forever.

Dad and Mom

650 OBITUARIES

Walsh, Roberta

Passed away, surrounded with the love of her daughters, at The Peterborough Regional Health Centre, Peterborough, on Sunday, December 31, 2023.

Roberta Walsh, age 77 of Wilberforce, was the beloved wife of the late Max Walsh (2007). Loved mother of Kathy (Stephen) Rogers of Wilberforce, Rhonda Walsh of Wilberforce, Julie Walsh of Colborne and Predeceased by Robert Walsh. Cherished grandmother of Michael and Stephanie. Sister of Jackie (Wayne Campbell). Predeceased by Sylvia Bidgood. Sister-in-law of the late Blanche and the late Bob Aston, Joan (the late Fred) Meharrie, Judy (Vince) Coburn, the late Jackie (Emile) Bouchard and the late Stan (Norma) & Bernard (Lois). Roberta was a lover of both family and community. She enjoyed bringing people together and sharing good fortune. Roberta with Max operated the Bostonian Motel – welcoming many folks into our community – lots of fun was always happening; bonfires, swimming, good food and good times. Roberta is well known to many as "Brown Owl" a title she was very proud of. Roberta held the position of Curling Club President for many years enjoying the sport tremendously and still an avid watcher as she whammied the teams she did not like. Her most treasured accomplishment was her family with a special place in her heart for her grandchildren. Roberta's family received friends and relatives at St. Margaret's Anglican Church, 2323 Loop Rd., Wilberforce on Thursday, January 4, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. A Funeral Service followed at 1:00 p.m. with Dave Burton presiding. Reception followed at the Lloyd Watson Community Centre, Wilberforce. Interment Essonville Cemetery, Essonville. As expressions of sympathy, donations to Essonville Historic Church would be appreciated by the family. Arrangements entrusted to M.G. Daly Funeral Home, Maynooth. (613) 338-3259 (Condolence messages may be e-mailed to dalyfuneralhome@bellnet.ca or visit www.mgdalyfuneralhome.com).

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Community Funeral Home

Jean Tyler (nee Morrison)

(Resident of Haliburton)

Peacefully at Haliburton Hospital on Sunday evening, January 7, 2024 in her 98th year. Beloved wife of the late Ron Tyler (1994). Loving mother of Sharon and Cathy (John). Predeceased by her siblings Lorna and Arthur. Fondly remembered by her many nieces and nephews.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends and family were invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209 on Friday morning, January 12, 2024 for a Funeral Service in the Chapel at 12 o'clock. (Visitation one hour prior) As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

www.communityfuneralhomes.com

650 OBITUARIES

Community Funeral Home

Douglas "Doug" Glen McElwain

(Resident of Fenelon Falls)

Peacefully at Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay on Saturday January 6, 2024 in his 86th year. Beloved husband and best friend of Darlene McElwain (nee Gill). Loving father of Nancy (Randy Martin) and Janet (Tim Sargent). Fondly remembered by his grandchildren Shannon (Mike), Corey, Kevin (Genevieve), Adam (Jordan) and by his great grandchildren Issac, Zackary, Kase, Kielle and Everett. Dear brother of William and Linda (Len Thompson) and Donna. Predeceased by his great grandson Cameron, his sisters Florence, Bonnie, Diane, Patricia and by his brothers Wilson, Wallace, Harry, Donald and Gerald. Also lovingly remembered by many nieces and nephews. Doug worked for Holland Lumber in Oshawa for many years as a truck driver. He enjoyed country music and most of all his family.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends were invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario **(705) 457-9209** on Monday morning, January 15, 2024 from 11 a.m until time of the Funeral Service in the Chapel at 12 o'clock (Noon). Interment later South Wilberforce Cemetery. As an expression of sympathy, donations to a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.

www.communityfuneralhomes.com

Community Funeral Home

Irene Roberts-McGuire (nee Bain)

(Resident of Haliburton, Ontario)

Peacefully at Highland Wood in Haliburton on Thursday morning, January 4, 2024 in her 97th year. Cherished daughter of the late Henry Duncan Bain and his wife Emily (nee Henderson). Beloved wife of the late Stanley Roberts and the late Murray McGuire. Loving mother of Maxine (Wim), Rod (Pam) and Cleve (Liane). Fondly remembered by her grandchildren Jocelyn (Kris), Krista (Jeff), Vanessa (Johnny), Logan (Meghan), Paige, Preston (Erin) and by her great grandchildren McGregor, Corson, Waverly, Charlotte, Tommy, Brinton and McKye. Predeceased by her sister Ruby (Gordon), her brothers Clarence (Ruth), Wilbert (Jean) and Leslie (Marjorie). Also lovingly remembered by her many nieces and nephews.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends and family were invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209 on Monday evening, January 8, 2024 from 6-8 p.m. Then again on Tuesday morning, January 9, 2024 from 10 - 12 (Noon). A Funeral Service followed in the Chapel. Interment later at Evergreen Cemetery, Haliburton. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton 4C's - Food Bank, Lakeside Church or West Guilford Baptist Church would be appreciated by the family.

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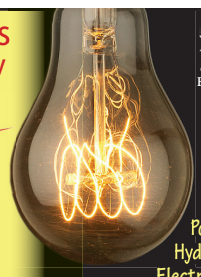

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Municipalities face up to 21% reduction in provincial grants

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

The numbers are in, and although the provincial funding cuts to municipalities aren't as bad as once feared, local governments will have to scramble to cope with the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue.

All municipalities started the new year with a letter from the provincial government outlining its reduction in funding. The numbers vary widely, from 10% in Monmouth to 21% in Anson, Hindon and Minden based on a perplexing accounting formula.

Adding to the problems created by the shortfall is the government's announcement it will not begin forwarding its grant money until June. Traditionally, municipalities started receiving transfer payments in March or April. The later date will probably result in cash flow difficulties.

Most municipalities are responding by hitting the books, going line by line through their operating budgets to see where money can be saved.

There seems to be no overall trend in the cuts. Some of the smaller municipalities were insulated from drastic reductions; some were hit as hard as the county's larger municipalities.

However, it should be remembered that provincial funding accounts for roughly 20% of a municipality's income. "Any loss of funding is serious but I don't think (the announcements) are quite as dramatic as they first appeared," says Stanhope Reeve Jock Mavor. While committed to not increasing taxes, he notes the cuts to his municipality represent 4% of the overall budget, or $30 on a $600 tax bill.

Here's a brief look at what each municipality will have to do without in the next fiscal year:

Minden: a 21% reduction, or $93,000 (includes unconditional grants and roads)
Bicroft: 21% or $18,200
Cardiff: 19% or $32,000
Dysart et al: 17% or $142,000
Glamorgan: 18% or $26,100
Lutterworth: 18% or $28,400
Monmouth: 10.3% or $17,550
Sherborne et al: 12% or $17,200
Snowdon: 11% or $11,000
Stanhope: 18% or $40,300

It is also important to remember supplementary roads funding is drying up. Small municipalities especially have been dependent on this funding to buy equipment, which costs tens of thousands of dollars. As clerk Roger Hogan of Cardiff says, "the Ministry of Transportation

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THE JOYS OF WINTER: While her mother and other women "on the hill" overlooking Haliburton hammered signs in trees welcoming home Bonnie Amson, who returned on Friday from a year in Australia, Siobhan Creelman took advantage of the snow to toboggan down the hill behind her house.

Construction slows down across the county – with a few exceptions

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Construction workers – go east! That seems to be one of the few places in the county where there was in increase in construction last year.

In 1995, there was a general decrease in the number of building permits issued by the 10 municipalities, as well as a decrease in the value of the construction. One exception is Cardiff, where they enjoyed an increase in the construction of new dwellings.

Stanhope also witnessed a small increase, thanks to people adding onto their existing dwellings. But unlike Cardiff, the number of new dwellings in Stanhope decreased.

"I was amazed," says Cardiff's chief building official, Dale Shannick, of the increase in permits. In 1994, he issued 76 permits, including eight new dwellings. In 1995, 12 new dwellings were built and most were valued at more than $100,000.

In Stanhope, a big jump in the number of additions and renovations accounted for the small surge in statistics. There were 45 additions in 1995 compared to 36 in 1994 and double the number (six) of renovations. The number of new cottages remained constant at seven, but the number of dwellings dropped from nine to four.

There wasn't a major drop in construction values in Anson, Hindon and Minden, even though the number of new homes and cottages dropped by almost a third. In 1994, there were 16 new cottages with a total value of $780,000. Last year, there were only 11 new cottages, but they were much more expensive ones, with a total value of $890,000.

Likewise, the new homes seem to be worth more. The total value for the 15 new homes built in 1994 was $1.1-million. Only 11 homes were built in 1995, but their combined value was $940,000.

Most of the other numbers stayed the same.

"People are definitely watching their pennies," says AHM building inspector Doug Schell. Instead of building a new place, people are fixing up their existing one.

Schell and Ernie Hills of Snowdon noticed an increase in the number of pre-fabricated homes, which are less expensive for the consumer but provide few local jobs.

"We really flipped back to the 1993 levels," Hills says. "There

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More user fees likely at Stanhope airport

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

While it's never pleasant to trim $10,000 from your annual spending habits, the Stanhope municipal airport will find the task relatively easy compared to next year's challenge of cutting a further $10,000.

The provincial government previously helped "top up" the airport's operating deficit to a maximum of $20,000 a year. This year, that amount will be reduced by half, and totally eliminated in 1997.

Where's the $20,000 to come from?

Airport manager Mike Carey says the airport, which already runs on a lean budget, especially when compared to other airports, began cutting costs three years ago in preparation for a reduction of funds. That process will be accelerated. As well, the airport plans to increase its revenue from outside sources.

"It's unfortunate this is happening but we'll be okay," he says. "We've been bringing in more revenue and not spending as much every year for the past three years... We'll be in good shape compared to other airports (which have relied more heavily on provincial funds)."

The airport is looking at charging a fee for any revenue-generating flight. There might also be other types of user fees.

"The pilots are very helpful

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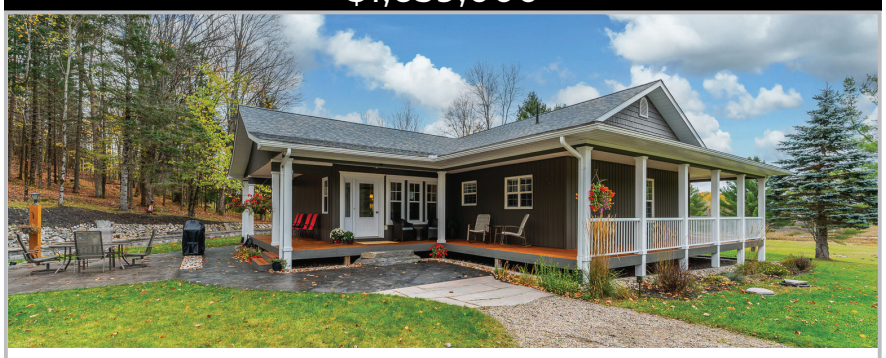

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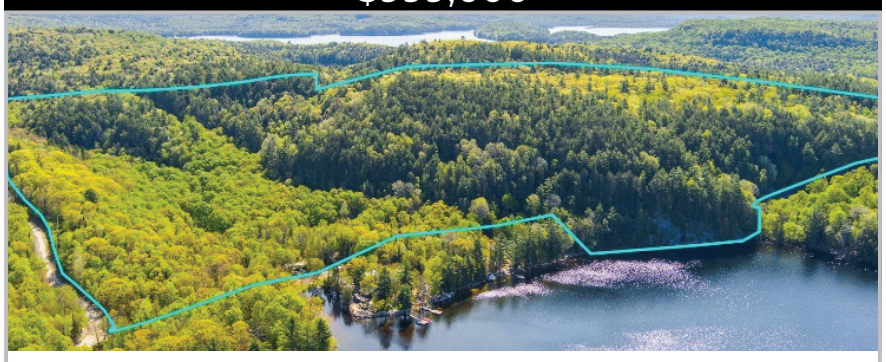

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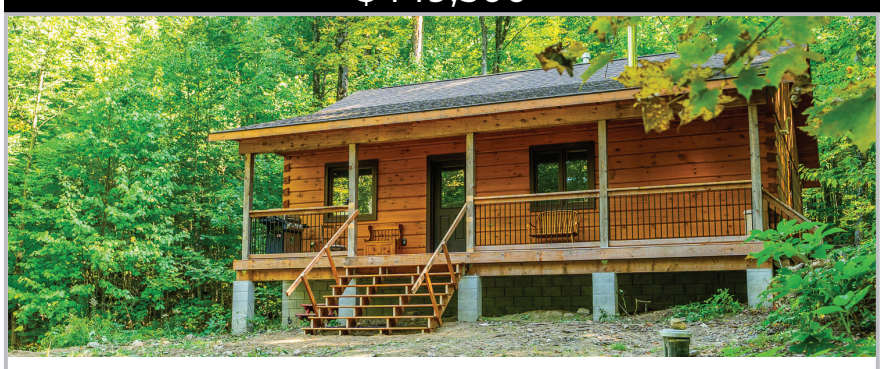

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